

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSC-05 INRE-00 CIAE-00 EB-08
INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 OIC-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00
SS-15 SP-02 L-03 H-01 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-07 EUR-12
NEA-10 PRS-01 PA-01 NSCE-00 /115 W
-----042526 090309Z /62

O 081659Z AUG 77
FM USMISSION GENEVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 110
INFO USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NE YORK IMMEDIATE
USDOC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
WHITE HOUSE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 GENEVA 6737
C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (FOR OMISSION EO TAGS SUBJECT)
FROM VANDEN HEUVEL

DEPT PASS: SECRETARY VANCE AND LABOR FOR SECRETARY MARCHALL AND
HOROWITZ

USUN FOR AMBASSADOR YOUNG:

COMMERCE FOR SECRETARY KREPS

WHITE HOUSE FOR BRZEZINSKI, JORDAN, WATSON, EIZENSTAT

IO FOR ASST SECY MAYNES, DEPUTY ASST SECY DALLEY AND
ALLISON PALMER

L FOR HANSELL; S/IL FOR GOOD; S/P FOR LAKE

USIA FOR RHINEHART

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ILO
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SUBJECT: US CREDIBILITY AND THE ILO

1. SUMMARY: ONE OF THE MAJOR QUESTIONS THAT THE
CABINET LEVEL COMMITTEE IN THE ILO WILL HAVE TO
CONSIDER IS THAT OF U.S. CREDIBILITY. THE ISSUE IS
USUALLY POSED AS ARGUING THAT IF THE U.S. DOES NOT
WITHDRAW AS ITS LETTER THREATENED, WE WILL BE

EXPOSED AS A PAPER TIGER. I FEEL STRONGLY THAT THIS ANALYSIS IS INADEQUATE, THAT THE QUESTION OF CREDIBILITY HAS SEVERAL DIMENSIONS -- INCLUDING THAT OF OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE UN SYSTEM AS A WHOLE -- THAT BY EXTENDING THE DEADLINE OF THE LETTER OF INTENT, WHILE REITERATING ITS OBJECTIVES, WE GIVE THE PRESIDENT AN OPTION THAT NOT ONLY MAINTAINS OUR CREDIBILITY ON THE ILO ISSUE BUT ON THE LARGER UN ISSUE AS WELL. ALL OF THE IMEC COUNTRIES HAVE URGED US TO REMAIN AND HELP THEM ACHIEVE OUR MUTUAL OBJECTIVES. WE HAVE EVERYTHING TO GAIN AND NOTHING TO LOSE BY RESPONDING POSITIVELY BY EXTENDING THE DEADLINE. INDEED IT WOULD KEEP THE PRESSURE ON ALL CONCERNED WHILE WE SOUGHT OUR OBJECTIVES WHICH ALL OF THESE COUNTRIES THINK REASONABLY ATTAINABLE. END SUMMARY.

2. A MAJOR CONSIDERATION IN THE DECISION TO BE MADE ON U.S. MEMBERSHIP IN THE ILO IS THE EFFECT ON OUR CREDIBILITY OF A DECISION NOT TO WITHDRAW. IT IS A CONSIDERATION OF WHICH ALL OF OUR IMEC FRIENDS ARE AWARE. THEIR FIRST RESPONSE IS TO QUESTION THE CREDIBILITY OF OUR COMMITMENT TO THE OBJECTIVES OF THE 1975 LETTER, WONDERING WHY WE WOULD WITHDRAW NOW WHEN THOSE OBJECTIVES ARE REASONABLY ATTAINABLE. THE POSITION THEY TAKE IS THAT
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THE ILO, AND THEIR ABILITY TO SHAPE THE ILO AS WE WOULD IT TO BE SHAPED, WOULD BE SERIOUSLY IMPAIRED IF WE WERE TO LEAVE.

3. IN FACT, THIS MISSION WOULD AGREE THAT IF THE CHOICE WERE SOLELY BETWEEN WITHDRAWING THE LETTER OF INTENT AND REMAINING IN THE ORGANIZATION ON THE ONE HAND, OR LETTING THE LETTER STAND ON THE OTHER HAND AND GETTING OUT, WE WOULD REGRETFULLY CHOOSE GETTING OUT BECAUSE WE BELIEVE THE POSITION LAID DOWN WAS SUCH THAT THE CALCULUS OF OUR INTERESTS WOULD FORCE US TO THAT CONCLUSION. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, HOWEVER, THE DAMAGE TO OUR NORTH-SOUTH RELATIONS, TO OUR POSITIVE IMAGE OF CONSTRUCTIVE, CREATIVE LEADERSHIP, AND TO THE U.N. SYSTEM ITSELF WOULD BE ENORMOUS. IT WOULD BE THE PRICE WE WOULD HAVE TO PAY FOR HAVING BOXED OURSELVES INTO A CORNER.

4. FORTUNATELY, I BELIEVE THERE IS A THIRD WAY -- ONE WHICH ALLOWS US TO CONTINUE OUR MEMBERSHIP IN THE ILO, AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING, AND AT THE SAME TIME TO MAINTAIN OUR CREDIBILITY. THIS WOULD

BE FOR THE U.S. TO LEAVE ITS LETTER OF INTENT ON
THE TABLE, BUT EXTEND THE DEADLINE. THIS COULD BE

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USMDOC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
WHITE HOUSE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 GENEVA 6737

FROM VANDEN HEUVEL

DEPT PASS: SECRETARY VANCE AND LABOR SECRETARY MARCHALL AND
HOROWITZ

USUN FOR AMBASSADOR YOUNG

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DONE LEGALLY AS OUTLINED IN THE MISSION'S
6030 AND IN SCHWEBEL'S MEMORANDUM OF LAW
CONTAINED IN GENEVA'S 6427

5. I BELIEVE THAT, BY EXTENDING THE NOVEMBER
DEADLINE, WE WOULD (1) AVOID REVERSING THE
POSITION TAKEN EARLIER, (2) MAINTAIN THE
ULTIMATE THREAT OF WITHDRAWAL AND, AT THE SAME
TIME, (3) ALLOW THE ADMINISTRATION AN ADDITIONAL
PERIOD FOR THE IMEC COUNTRIES, WORKING WITH US,
TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES WE HAVE SET. THESE
COUNTRIES HAVE SAID THEY BELIEVE OUR SHARED OB-
JECTIVES ARE ATTAINABLE IF WE CAN BE PATIENT WITH
RESPECT TO OUR DEADLINE AND FLEXIBLE IN OUR DIPLO-
MATIC APPROACH. THEY HAVE EMPHASIZED, MOREOVER,
THAT THEIR ABILITY TO ACHIEVE THESE OBJECTIVES
WILL BE GREATER IF WE REMAIN IN THE ILO -- INDEED,
THAT OUR DEPARTURE WOULD SIGNIFICANTLY WEAKEN
THEIR COLLECTIVE STRENGTH. WE HAVE ALSO RECEIVED
INDICATIONS FROM A NUMBER OF G-77 COUNTRIES THAT
THEY, TOO, SHARE OUR OBJECTIVES AND WOULD WORK TO
MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO REMAIN. THESE INCLUDE THE
OFFER MADE TO MAYNES BY THE EGYPTIANS TO HELP MOBILIZE
SPECIAL EFFORTS BY THE G-77 (CAIRO 12182), AS WELL
AS THE OFFER BY THE JORDANIAN LABOR MINISTER TO
INTERCEDE WITH HIS COLLEAGUES (AMMAN 4248),
AS WELL AS MY OWN CONVERSATIONS WITH KEY G-77
REPRESENTATIVES HERE.

6. I DO NOT SEE HOW THE UNITED STATES COULD
POSSIBLY LOSE CREDIBILITY IF THE PRESIDENT WERE
TO RESPOND POSITIVELY TO THESE EXPRESSIONS OF
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ALMOST UNIVERSAL CONCERN BY EXTENDING THE DEADLINE
OF OUR LETTER -- NOT WITHDRAWING IT -- WHILE MAKING
CLEAR THAT WE CONTINUE TO ADHERE TO OUR OBJECTIVES.

7. INDEED, I STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT SUCH A MOVE WOULD
MEASURABLY INCREASE OUR CREDIBILITY. CREDIBILITY
HAS MANY DIMENSIONS. ON MARCH 17, IN ONE OF HIS
FIRST MAJOR SPEECHES, PRESIDENT CARTER ADDRESSED THE
UN SAYING THAT WE SHARE ITS COMMITMENTS AND THAT WE
SUPPORT ITS IDEALS. THIS SUPPORT HAS BEEN REPEATED
NUMEROUS TIMES BY OTHER ADMINISTRATION SPOKESMEN.
WHETHER WE LIKE IT OR NOT, U.S. WITHDRAWAL FROM THE

ILO WOULD BE WIDELY INTERPRETED AS A STRIKE AGAINST THE UN SYSTEM AS A WHOLE. IT WOULD ESTABLISH A PRECEDENT THAT WOULD HAVE UNPREDICTABLE CONSEQUENCES, AND IT WOULD BE SEEN AS SUCH. IT WOULD UNDERMINE THE INCREASINGLY SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS OF THE NEW U.S. GOVERNMENT TO ESTABLISH RELATIONSHIPS OF TRUST AND MUTUAL ADVANTAGE WITH THE THIRD WORLD.

8. WE IN GENEVA THINK, THEREFORE, THAT THERE IS ANOTHER DIMENSION TO OUR CREDIBILITY THAT HAS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT, AND THIS HAS TO DO WITH THE BASIC ATTITUDE OF THIS ADMINISTRATION TOWARD THE UN SYSTEM AS A WHOLE. WHEN THE MATTER IS CONSIDERED IN THIS LIGHT, I BELIEVE THE ONLY MEANINGFUL OPTION WE HAVE IS TO DEMONSTRATE THIS BASIC SUPPORT BY LISTENING TO THE ADVICE OF OUR FRIENDS AND EXTENDING THE DEADLINE. THE SUPPORT AND COOPERATION THEY HAVE GIVEN US IN OUR EFFORT OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS HAS BEEN UNPREDECEDED, AND IS CERTAINLY ONE OF THE MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PERIOD. OUR FRIENDS FEEL THAT A LITTLE MORE TIME AND FLEXIBILITY WOULD BE THE INGREDIENTS OF SUCCESS. I STRONGLY FEEL THAT WE OWE IT TO THEM, TO THE UN SYSTEM, AND ABOVE ALL TO OURSELVES AND

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OUR MORE FUNDAMENTAL CREDIBILITY TO CHOOSE THE MIDDLE OPTION OF EXTENDING THE DEADLINE TO SEE WHAT RESULTS CAN BE ACHIEVED. SORENSON

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED THE SECRETARY

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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